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OTTAWA
April 25, 1979.

MEMORANDUM

Attached, for your information, is a summary of the Progressive Conservative Policy on Indian Affairs and Northern Development which may be of interest to you in light of the current election campaign.

If you wish any further information, please contact Jodi White at Progressive Conservative Headquarters in Ottawa (613 - 238-6111).

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P.C. POLICY ON INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

INDIAN AFFAIRS

We have established and imposed a system which has locked too many Indian people into the stereotype and into the fact of aimless dependence upon the state and the architects of that system are at least as much to blame as its victims.

- Joe Clark

It seems to me in the long term, it may be far less costly as well as more generous and more just to let the Indians try on their own. We must recognize the transformation will not occur overnight, and all parties must have patience, courage and be far-sighted enough to realize that the symptoms of years of deprivations will not magically dissolve overnight.

- Dr. J.R. Holmes
P.C. Indian Affairs Critic

The problems of native people in Canada are written in the statistics of short life expectancy, increased infant mortality, mercury poisoning, unemployment, substandard housing, ill health and poverty.

The failure of the government to alleviate Indian and native problems is a result of the imposition of policies by the non-Indian community without full consultation with or regard for the long-term effects on the native community. It is clear that the government's approach of expending huge sums of money has had little effect in resolving Indian problems.

The Progressive Conservative Party believes there should be full, equal and open consultation on Indian Act amendments, and on June 15, 1978, we proposed in a special debate to set up a joint House-Senate Committee to travel the country hearing recommendations from Indian communities on revisions to this Act which is the cornerstone of Indian policy. We do not want to repeat the paternalistic, centralist and secretive policies of the past decade. The following points outline our approach to developing a firm cultural, economic and social base in Canadian society for our native peoples:

* The needs, aspirations and development requirments of native communities are far too varied to be handled effectively by a large centralized bureaucracy in Ottawa. The focus must be shifted to allow federal policies to respond more effectively to band initiatives. Policies and programs should, as much as possible, be devised, managed and delivered by native people.

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* Public funds should benefit native communities as directly as possible.

* We recognize the importance of land and community as fundamental principles in the development of native policies and are committed to making every effort to negotiate fair, just and reasonable settlements of outstanding land claims.

* We support the recognition of aboriginal and treaty rights as an integral part of native policy.

* We would extend the protection of the Human Rights Act to all native peoples.

* We would re-arrange ministerial responsibilities to end the conflict between the physical development of the North and the cultural and personal development of the native people who live there.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Yukon

The Progressive Conservative Party recognizes the potential of the Yukon and the enormous contribution it can make to the rest of the country. A P.C. government would:

* grant provincial status to the Yukon

* transfer the assets of the Northern Canada Power Commission to the Government of the Yukon Territory

* encourage resource development and re-establish investor confidence in the Yukon.

Northwest Territories

* A P.C. government would enter into negotiations with the Territorial Legislature to determine a time frame for provincial status.

* We would assist in developing long-range transportation systems and in developing policies which would encourage and stimulate business and encourage resource development by reducing the regulatory power of government.

* In consultation with the Territorial Legislature, we would restructure the NCPC with a view to improving the lifestyle of the residents and reducing the consumer cost of electrical energy in the North.

* We would provide labour legislation (similar to that in the provinces) for dealing with industrial disputes.

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P.C. policy on Indian affairs and northern development.

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